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who (6) turns away and (7) inadvertently falls into a well, but is seen again (8) to the left of the well, in conversation with Buddha. He appears next (9) as Dharmasri the merchant's son, at Kamarthi, and next to this (10) making his offering to Dipankara Buddha; above this (11), attending to the discourse of Dipankara; above this (12) in conversation with his parents; above this (13), his parents in conversation; and again above this (14), his parents in conversation, without caption; and last above this (15), Dipankara discoursing to the parents. The subsidiary scenes around the outer edge of the whole picture are connected with almsgiving, but the sequence is not apparent in detail.

The inscription below, in Ranja characters (a Nepalese form of Nagari) is written in a highly Sanskritic vernacular (Nepalese, or Niwari) and mentions the reigning king, Maharajadhiraja Jaya Mahendra Simha, Vijaya Raja. This king, who is also known as Mahipatindra and as Jaya Vira Mahindra, reigned from 1694 to 1722 A.D.; his name is recorded in the Buddhist *Vamsavali*.<sup>\*</sup> This is an addition to the few known inscriptions of his reign. The donors, residents of Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, are then mentioned; they include one Tanvakala and his wife, Jasadhara Lakshmi, a son and two daughters. Dipankara Bodhisattva and the Pindapatra Avadana are then mentioned, and the date given as Samvat 837 (equivalent to A.D. 1716), the month of Sravana, the thirteenth day of the dark fortnight. The inscription concludes with the invocation of a blessing on all the donors.

Edifying stories of almsgiving by monkeys to a Buddha are of considerable antiquity in Buddhist art. The gift as a rule consists of an alms-bowl containing honey or palm juice. A scene of this kind appears on a Gandhara relief from the Sikri stupa (Lahore Museum: Foucher, *L'art greco-bouddhique du Gandhara*, I, p. 254); as one of the eight leading events of Gautama Buddha's life on a stele from Sarnath (Sarnath Museum: Foucher, *The Beginnings of Buddhist Art*, Pl. 19—here, also, the monkey falls down a well); and in a Nepalese MS. of the *Prajñāparamita*, Cam., 1643 (Foucher, *L'iconographie bouddhique*, I, Pl. s. VII, 1 and x, 4). For further discussion of such scenes and other references see Foucher, *L'art greco-bouddhique du Gandhara*, I, pp. 512-515.

The present painting is an important document of Nepalese art, of unusual excellence for so late a period as the eighteenth century, and representing the continuation of a long and uninterrupted tradition. It is remarkable alike in organization and strong harmonious color as well as for its admirable craftsmanship. Amongst the conventions of particular interest may be remarked the ancient method of continuous narration, where the same

figure is repeated in the same composition in successive moments of the story; the distinction of darkness from light, comparable with the differentiation of day and night scenes in the early Rajasthani Ragmala paintings; and the indication of a city by means of a house and persons within it.

The Museum collection includes three other examples of Nepalese Buddhist painting, as follows:

17.1683. Lamaist assembly of the type Ts'og-sin: a tree, its branches loaded with divinities. On cotton cloth, in full color and gold. The inscription, in Ranja characters, is dated Samvat 916 (A.D. 1795), and indicates that the painting was made in or for the Vaisavarnna monastery, in the great city of Lalitapur in Nepal.

19.664. A representation of a caitya or Buddhist reliquary monument, described in the inscription as the Usnisa-caitya: surrounded by divinities. On cotton cloth, in full color and gold. The inscription, in Ranja characters, gives the date Samvat 979 (A.D. 1878), and mentions the Asaka Mandapa in the great city of Kantipur in Nepal.

17.67. A painted wooden shrine, fifteenth or sixteenth century, containing terra cotta medallions of Buddhist divinities and saints. The painting of the doors and frames is purely decorative, that of the lower part of the doors representing pomegranate branches; but that of the panel below the doors represents five dancing Dakinis. A. K. C.

### Siamese Bronzes

THE Museum of Fine Arts possesses four Siamese Buddhist bronzes. The earliest and most important of these—a standing figure of a Bodhisattva, perhaps Siddhartha,<sup>\*</sup> or possibly Dipankara Buddha<sup>†</sup>—forms a part of the bequest of the late Hervey E. Wetzell. The figure is crowned and wears earrings, but is otherwise in monastic garb; the *usnisa* is conspicuous, but the uppermost part of it, including perhaps a flame, is lost; the right hand is raised in *abhaya mudra* (the seal of "Do not fear"); the left, pendent (*lola hasta*); the feet and parts of the robe are lost. The founder has known how to endow his work with a gentle charm and grace, and even with dignity, but hardly with power. In terms of European art it is Gothic of the fourteenth or fifteenth century rather than of the thirteenth century, or Romanesque. The sensitive treatment of the whole figure (and not least, of the hands) and the absence of any hard delineation or reduction of the features to a mere formula, nevertheless show that the figure must be classed as an example, though a late example, of the zenith period of Siamese art—the Sukothai-Savankolok period, 750-1100 A. D. The

<sup>\*</sup>Voretzsch, *Ueber althindische Kunst in Siam*, *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, Vol. V, Fig. 31.

<sup>†</sup>Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, Pl. VI, c.

<sup>\*</sup>Sylvain Levi, *Le Nepal*, 11, 261.



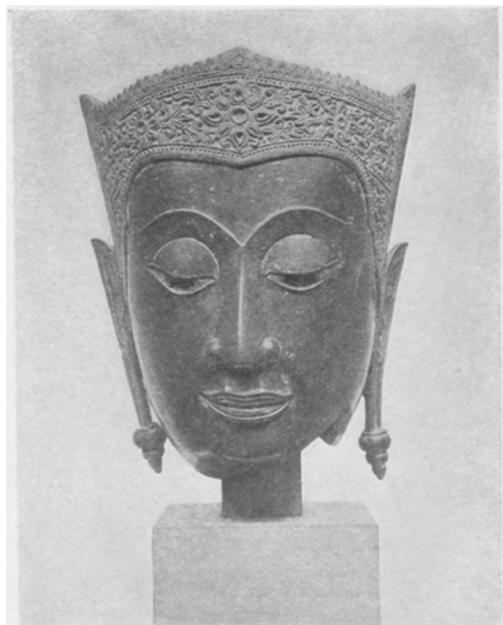
*Siamese bronze, Siddhartha ?  
Sukothai-Savankolok period*

Bequest of Hervey E. Wetzel

tendency to over-refinement and elegance, offering a marked contrast to the robust modeling of earlier works, suggests that a date as late as the eleventh century may not be far from the mark.

No less clearly the fine bronze head of a Bodhisattva, crowned and wearing earrings of a type identical with those of the standing figure, exhibits the characteristics of a later style. It is true that it is more powerful in effect than the standing figure, and this is not merely due to its large scale; but the features — eyebrows, eyeballs,

nose and mouth — are now reduced to formulæ, and the outlines of lips and eyelids are deeply furrowed. The expression rather derives from the craftsman's skill than the artist's inspiration. The Indian imager, like so many artists of the Renaissance, was often goldsmith as well as sculptor; here, especially in the finely executed crown, the goldsmith is predominant. The sharp contouring of the features, however, although unmistakable, is not yet exaggerated, and the net result is not without grandeur; we may infer accordingly that our head derives from an early part of the Ayuthia



Siamese bronze, *Bodhisattva* Early Ayuthia period

Ross Collection



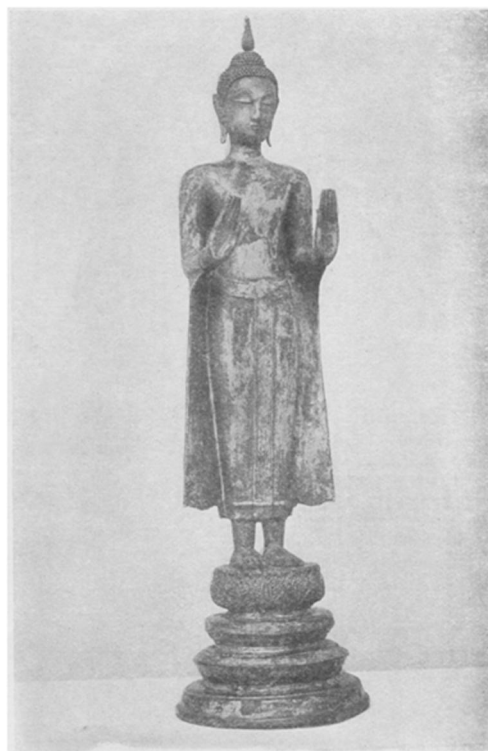
Siamese bronze, *Buddha* Late Ayuthia period

Ross Collection

period (1350-1750 A.D.) or the time immediately preceding it. It may be added that, like other Siamese figures, this is a hollow casting by the *cire perdue* process, and the solid core is still intact within the metal surface; the upper part of the coiffure and perhaps a flame originally rising from the *usnisa* are missing. Two other examples, lacking the vitality of those already described, may be assigned to a later part of the Ayuthia period. The first, the upper part of the standing figure of a Buddha, is complete to the waist, so far as the torso is concerned, but only a part of the right arm remains, and the left is broken away at the shoulder. The second is an entire standing figure of Dipankara Buddha, with both hands raised in *abhaya mudra*, supported on a pedestal consisting of a lotus flower rising from a base in three tiers. The hands and feet are treated with little feeling, the former affording a marked contrast with those of the Wetzel icon. In each of the two late pieces now described the hard modeling is softened by the coat of lacquer which underlies the gilding. Another characteristic of late Siamese art appears in a reduction in size and increase in number of the curls which cover the head and *usnisa*; these are now, indeed, reduced to a mere incrustation of little protuberances, not at all like hair.

Other notices of Siamese bronzes will be found in the work by Voretzsch, cited above; in Fourneraux, *Le Siam ancien*; Coomaraswamy, *Visvakarma* (Pl. 50); and in *An Antique Bronze Image of Siva Ardhanarisvara, from Phrapatam in Southern Siam* (India Society).

A. K. C.



Siamese bronze, *Dipankara Buddha* Late Ayuthia period

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